

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 NEA-10 AF-10 MC-02 ACDA-19 TRSE-00

AID-20 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4156

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SET 1 OF 2 PARIS 27242

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, XF, FR

SUBJECT: ME: FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT

1. SUMMARY. FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT DEFENDED FRENCH MIDDLE EAST POLICY IN LENGTHY DEBATE REPLYING TO QUESTIONS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 17. JOBERT'S HISTORY LECTURE AND REITERATION OF FRENCH POSITIONS REVEALED NO CHANGE IN BASIC FRENCH ME POLICY. END SUMMARY.

2. FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT MADE STATEMENT OF OVER ONE HOUR, SEVERAL BRIEF INTERVENTIONS AND FINAL SUMMARY DURING OFTEN HEATED QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OCTOBER 17M ADMITTING THAT HE IS CONSIDERED COLD HEARTED, JOBERT REVIEWED LENGTHY HISTORY OF ARAB/ISRAELI CONFRONTATION WHICH REFLECTED STANDARD FRENCH CRITICISM OF ISRAEL. HE CITED AS "LOST OPPORTUNITY" ISRAEL'S 1971 REJECTION OF JARRING
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MEMORANDUM WHICH EGYPTIANS HAD ACCEPTED; HE SAID ISRAEL TODAY IS "DISTRUSTFUL AND IN STATE OF NATIONAL TERROR, WHICH IS PERFECTLY UNDERSTANDABLE, BUT CURRENTLY LEADS ONLY TO WAR; THERE IS ALSO CONVICTION THAT TIME WORKS FOR ISRAEL." THIS

CHARACTERIZATION OF ISRAEL'S INTRANSIGENCE WAS BALANCED BY STATEMENT THAT ISRAELIS ARE COURAGEOUS, AND CONSCIOUSLY SUBJECTIVE REMARK "I PERSONALLY LIKE ISRAEL." HE ALSO EMPHASIZED "ISRAEL WILL NOT DISAPPEAR AND IS NOT MENACED WITH FRENCH GENOCIDAL CRIME." HE SAID FACT THAT FRANCE WAS ONE OF FIRST TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL "COMMITTS US AND COMMITTS US ABSOLUTELY."

3. REGARDING ARABSN JOBERT EMPHASIZED FRENCH HAD HISTORIC AND NATIONAL INTERESTS AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN. HE DEFENDED HIS REMARK OF OCTOBER 8 WHICH QUESTIONED WHETHER "ATTEMPT TO MOVE INTO ONE'S OWN HOME NECESSARILY CONSTITUTES AN UNEXPECTED AGGRESSION," BY SHIFTING EMPHASIS TO WORKD "UNEXPECTED." HE PROTESTED "WHAT DID I SAY EXCEPT THAT TERRITORIES WERE OCCUPIED -- WHICH IS EVIDENT-- THAT PEOPLE WHO CONSIDERED THESE TERRITORIES THEIR OWN WISH TO RETURN AND THAT THEIR AGGRESSION UNDER SUCH CONDITIONS COULD NOT BE UNEXPECTED."

4. REPLYING TO DEMANDS THAT ARMS EMBARGO BE APPLIED TO ALL ME COUNTRIES, JOBERT SIMPLY REPEATED GOF POLICY OF DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN BATTLEFIELD COUNTRIES (ISRAEL, SYRIA, JORDAN, EGYPT), TO WHICH EMBARGO APPLIES, AND NON-BATTLEFIELD COUNTRIES, TO WHICH ARMS CAN BE SHIPPED DESPITE THEIR SENDING FORCES INTO PRESENT CONFLICT. HE STOOD FIRM AGAINST PARLIAMENTARY INTERRUPTIONS AND CROSSFIRE ON THIS SUBJECT. HE ALSO REVIEWED KNOWN FRENCH POSITION ON MIRAGES DELIVERED TO LIBYA; HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE HAD NO PROOF AND THAT EGYPTIANS AND LIBYANS HAD GIVEN FORMAL ASSURANCES HESE PLANES NOT STATIONED IN EGYPT AND HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN CONFLICT. HE ADDED THAT "IF THE FACTS TURNED OUT OTHERWISE, GOF POSITION WOULD CHANGE."

5. WHILE CONTINUOUSLY EMPHASIZING PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF "GREAT POWERS" JOBERT SAID FRANCE ITSELF IS POWERLESS TO SOLVE ME PROBLEM. HE ALSO SAID EUROPE COULD NOT BE DETERMINING INFLUENCE, BUT IT COULD, AND MUST, EXERCISE ITS "MORAL FORCE. AT ANOTHER POINT JOBERT REVEALED THAT HE PESONALLY HAD NEVER FAVORED FOUR-POWER TALKS ON ME. THIS WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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ONLY ASPECT ON WHICH HE DIFFERED FROM PREVIOUS GAULLIST ME POLICY AND HE DID NOT THROW ANY FURTHER CLARIFICATION ON THIS POINT, INCLUDING WHETHER HE WOULD FAVOR FIVE-POWER TALKS.

6. WHILE NOT DEFINING WHAT ME SETTLEMENT SHOULD CONSIST OF, JOBERT REGRETTEED THAT THE PARIES TO THE HOSTILITIES APPEAR UNWILLING TO MOVE FROM WAR TO PEACE SETTLEMENT. HE SAID IF PARTIES ARE NOT READY, IT IS UP TO THE GREAT POWERS TO PRESS THEM TOWARD PEACE. AFTER EMPHASIZING CONSISTENCY OF FRENCH ATTITUDE SINCE 1967 AND ITS CURRENT POLICY, HE SAID THAT THE PRESENT CONFLICT COULD BE STOPPED BY US AND USSR IF THEY WISHED TO. "BUT" HE ADDD "ONE SEES MR. BREZHNEV, DETENTE CHAMPION, AND MR. KISSINGER, NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNER,

SHAKING HANDS WHILE THEIR COUNTRIES SHIP TO THE BATTLEFIELD ARMS BY THE THOUSANDS OF TONS." THIS GRATUITOUS REFERENCE WAS FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY "THE QUANTITY WHICH PASSES THROUGH MARSEILLES IS INFINITESIMAL IN COMPARISON."

7. AT ANOTHER POINT JOBERT SAID THE ONLY RESULT IF ONE CONCENTRATES ON THE HOSTILITIES WOULD BE TO CONFIRM, IN A PART OF THE WORLD WHICH PRESENTS A GREAT INTEREST FOR US, THE PRESENCE OF THE TWO VERY GREAT POWERS -- POWERS WHOSE TRUSTEE-SHIP MANY STATES WOULD LIKE TO SHAKE OFF." THIS TONE OF CRITICIZING BOTH SUPER POWERS EQUALLY WAS NOT CHALLENGED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY ORATORS WHO EXCHANGED HEATED PHRASES WITH HIM ON MOST SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON.

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